



# Family Court Project

Allen County

## Basic Information

<b>Population:</b>	360,412
<b>County Seat:</b>	Fort Wayne
<b>Judicial Officers:</b>	10 Judges and 13 Magistrates
<b>Date of Project Implementation:</b>	6/30/2006
<b>Project Judge/s:</b>	Judge Charles Pratt, Judge Thomas Felts and Judge Daniel Heath
<b>Administrative Contact:</b>	Lori Kolb 260-449-7258
<b>Project Funding:</b>	Family Court Project Grant

## Family Court Mission Statement

Please provide a mission statement for your Family Court Programming

Through the use of technology and local Trial Rules, the Allen County Family Court Project shall develop and maintain an effective case management system to share information between courts, coordinator services for families, and insure the provision of quality alternative dispute resolution.

## Family Court Programming

Please provide a description of your Family Court Programming

Allen County uses information sharing among multiple judges. Information sharing keeps judges up to date about pertinent information pertaining to one family involved in multiple cases. The coordinator maintains frequent contact with other court employees, various county offices, court customers and members of the general public for a variety of purposes. Sharing information helps court officials see the whole family's situation which leads to better service plans for the family. Information sharing provides communication within courts to better meet the needs of children and families in the court system. This ensures there are no redundant and conflicting orders and gives the presiding judge all the pertinent information involving family dynamics so decisions can be made according to what will benefit each family the most.

Allen Superior Court and Allen Circuit Court have been working in collaboration to develop a pro se Self Help Center and web-site for domestic relations and paternity cases. Four (4) local family law attorneys worked with the court to revise state forms to comply with local trial rules. In an effort to reduce costs, the court has partnered with Indiana Tech University in designing the Self Help Center web-site. Indiana Tech University has provided their expertise on web-site development free of charge to the court. The Self Help Center web-site will provide necessary forms and instructions to Allen County residents who are filing domestic relations cases without legal assistance. The Self Help Center will provide court staff with a resource that they can refer self-represented litigants to for

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assistance. This will eliminate court staff from answering questions for pro se litigants and avoid the possibility of any ethical violations related to providing this information.

**Number of Families Served**

Please provide an estimate of the number of families served through the Family Court Programming

802 families have been served through the Family Court Programming to-date.